

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending in the present application and are subject to an election requirement.

The Outstanding Office Action states that the application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention:

- Fig. 3-7;
- Fig. 8-10;
- Fig. 11-15; and
- Fig. 16-21.

The Outstanding Office Action further states that the Applicant is required to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The Outstanding Office Action states that Claim 1 is generic.

Applicant respectfully traverses this election requirement as the Examiner has identified distinct species based on a circuit configuration, namely, series (Figs. 3-7), parallel (Figs. 8-10), and a series-parallel combination (Figs. 11-15), and on different configurations for a variable watt density layered heater and methods of manufacturing (Figs. 16-21). While these species are distinct, they are so closely related that no additional searching would be required by the Examiner. A search of the relevant classes for the claimed invention, in which Claim 1 is generic, would provide results applicable to all the species identified by the Examiner. Applicants submit that the distinct species fall within the same general search classes and respectfully request that the election requirement be withdrawn.

However, in accordance with the Outstanding Office Action, Applicant elects the species in Figs. 3-7. The Claims that correspond with this species include: Claims 1-6, 10, 12-18, and 27.

**CONCLUSION**

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for further prosecution. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (314) 726-7524.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: 13 Aug 04

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